

# WORLD MASTERS TOPS 600-TEAM PLATEAU

LAS VEGAS – For the first time in tournament history, the LVSSA/SSUSA World Masters Championships surpassed the 600-team mark, as 612 teams played in a total of 1,997 games across the 13-day tournament.

The Men's 55 and 60 age divisions, the largest

**Please See Page 14**

■ PAGE 16: 14 WIN TRIPLE GRAND SLAM ■ PAGE 18: ALL TOURNAMENT PLAYERS

Photo by Jack Eberhard

## New Rules for 2018; Survey to be Done on 1-1 Count

AUBURN, ALA. – The 1-1 pitch count again dominated discussion here at the annual convention during National Rules Committee meetings.

The Senior Softball USA (SSUSA) Rules Committee permanently adopted the 1-1 count with no foul to waste for the 40 Masters divisions. The committee delayed until January a decision on extending the 1-1 count to Senior divisions until the results of a player survey were complete.

The pitch-count discussion centered on whether to continue the traditional 0-0 count (4 balls and 3

**Please See Page 9**

**BEST STATES TO RETIRE TO: PART 4**

# Island Life Popular With Senior Softball Players

**By Anthony Ramos  
Softball News Report**

**W**hen it comes to mixing senior softball and retirement, few states can match the appeal of Florida, Arizona and Texas, where players have the opportunity to play year-round and it's easy to stretch their retirement dollars.

There are a few excep-

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- PART 3** Remaining Top SSUSA States: AZ, TX, WA
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# News Briefing

## CARL'S CORNER

By Carl Gustafson

### Savoring the Old Salt

Larry Blankenship turned 94 on Dec. 7, the infamous Pearl Harbor day.

He was just 18 the day the Arizona went down and he joined up. A medic in World War II, he saw it all, the guns, guts and glory. The war baked a crust on his soul that is evident to this day.

He takes no crap off any man and dishes out humility to bold and beautiful alike. Star struck he is not.

Somewhere along the line after a war that suggested mankind was nuts and evil, he sought a corner in life where things made sense, where a man could take out his aggressions in a happy way, and men of various backgrounds, races and cultures could get along as brothers.

He found it in the game of softball.

Eventually it became his way of life. He plays softball six days a week. He is a pitcher; manages the first place team at the highest level of league ball; he uses his garage as a warehouse for league softballs and equipment.

The trunk of his car is a repository of softball paraphernalia. He is active in every facet of the game from administration to community interface—and he'll cuss you

Continued on Page 7

## SSUSA/China Fuels Growth of Sport in Hunan Province

By Terry Hennessy  
Senior Softball News

YEUYANG CITY, CHINA – The bullet train from Canton took three hours to get here.

There is no airport.

But the spirit of sports is growing strong here, in the fertile valleys of the Hunan Province smack in the middle of this country.

Ironically, it is an iconic American sport that the children embrace.

Shouts of “Play Ball!” and “Out,” and “Safe” can be heard on fields in primary and secondary schools amid the unmistakable sounds of ball games.

A group of Senior Softball USA players journeyed here in October to help promote tee ball and softball in a pilot project in the Yueyang District. The project began in 2015 and has introduced teeball and slowpitch softball to 17,683 elementary and secondary students in 334 classes.



**Bill Stone (TX), passing on words of wisdom during a training session.**

Ironically, seniors from the United States are partners in this program to introduce tee-ball and softball to some of the youngest



**SSUSA players with the school children in the Yueyang District tee ball pilot program.**

students in China. The Senior Softball USA group held seminars on the basics of the sport in three project schools.

Senior Softball-USA has established an office in Beijing and is working on the project in this remote region and throughout the country under its SSUSA/China subsidiary.

The Hunan Province may be remote, but this is where some of the most beloved stories of ancient China blossomed.

The rich and wide Yangtze River flows through the region, into Dongting Lake, one of the largest lakes in China. And in the middle of this lake is a gem of an island where dancing tea leaves have grown for 4,000 years.

It is the only place on Earth they grow.

Here too sprung the legend

of the tear-drop bamboo, whose bark was marked by the dark tears of concubines mourning the death of their husband, the emperor.

Now the city that graces the shores of the lake has blossomed with concrete. The bright lights of the tall condos and office buildings light the waves of the ancient lake. The roads teem with trucks and commerce spawned by two decades of economic growth that now reach even this remote location.

There are smart phones and fashionable jeans with tears and cars and the unmistakable influence of western society here. But there is also strands of community culture that hark back to the region's ancient past.

In a plaza the size of three

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# STATES: Costly Hawaii a Softball Paradise

Continued from Page 1

tions to the rule as noted in the Wallethub.com study, [2017's Best & Worst States to Retire](#).

One, as we reported earlier, is California, a state with the most Senior Softball-USA players (due to an abundance of year-round league play opportunity, as well as being the most populous state in the union), despite its higher cost of living.

Other popular states to play senior softball include Nevada, with a small population and great weather; Michigan, with a booming softball culture and history, and Colorado, which ranks near the top of the WalletHub survey and is a little-known senior softball mecca.

Then there is Hawaii.

In Hawaii, like California, the popularity of senior softball prevails over the high cost of living.

"Extremely popular," said Mike Sinnott (an SSUSA registered snowbird who lives primarily in New Mexico, and has a second residence in Hawaii) on the popularity of senior softball in Hawaii.

"There are about 70 teams in leagues in the state: 24 on the Big Island, 18 on Oahu, 15 on Maui and 13 on Kauai. That's in a state with a total population under 1.5 million. There are probably close to 1,500 total players, but many do not attend mainland tournaments and would not be in your database."

Sinnott, who says he would certainly like to make the permanent move to Hawaii, plays with Kona Gold on the Big Island, where about

half of the players on the team come from the mainland, mostly Northern and Southern California.

"The high cost of living may not be such a shock to them," says Sinnott about his teammates from the Golden State. "Coming from New Mexico, the cost of living in Hawaii is definitely an issue for us. Some guys moved to Hawaii years ago while still of working age and many others were raised on the islands."

"That being said, traveling to SSUSA tournaments on the mainland is very popular and often players from the various islands will come together to form teams in the different age brackets," continued Sinnott.

Boasting over 700 players and 50 teams from Hawaii, it is no surprise to see Ha-

waiian teams make the trip to the mainland to attend some of the larger SSUSA tournaments, such as the Winter World Championships in Phoenix, the Rock 'N Reno Challenge Cup, and the LVSSA/SSUSA World Masters Championships in Las Vegas, despite the cost of traveling.

"One of the big problems of living in Hawaii is that to participate in SSUSA tournaments, teams have to face the costs of traveling to, and staying on, the mainland," said Ed Schell, SSUSA Hawaii state director.

"That makes it really tough to play in multiple tournaments," said Schell.

"It is not unusual for Hawaii teams to play in only two competitive tournaments. We frequently run into teams who have played multiple (some as many as 10) tournaments and are really 'tournament-ready.' That's challenging."

Limiting the disadvantage of playing against more tournament-tested teams, Hawaii teams do have the advantage of year-round scheduling.

"Playing competitively year-round helps keep a skill set sharp," said Schell. "You don't face a three- to six-month weather forced layoff."

Nevada is in the top 10 in both SSUSA players and WalletHub's list.

It is no surprise that large population states such as

California, Florida and Texas would be among the top states of SSUSA players.

But despite ranking only 34th in population, Nevada (just under 3 million in population) cracks the top ten in SSUSA's player density with just under 1,000 registered players.

With high scores in both affordability (6th) and quality of life (9th), Nevada ranked eighth in the WalletHub study for best states to retire.

"Softball retirees coming to Nevada are never disappointed," said Bob Bravetti of Las Vegas. "Many players relocate to Las Vegas for the climate, lack of state income tax and reasonable housing and property taxes. I run the LVSSA website and receive requests from seniors looking

to relocate and play softball."

"With only four inches of rain per year, we are virtually never rained out," continued Bravetti. "When you include an amazing 292 sunny days annually and daily highs in January, our coldest month rarely dipping below 55 degrees, Las Vegas is softball heaven."

With the availability of fields (12 complexes used in 2017) and the attraction of Sin City, it is no surprise that Las Vegas is home to the largest senior softball tournament in the nation (LVSSA/SSUS World Masters Championships), as well as the second largest (LVSSA/SSUSA Southwest Championships).

Along with Las Vegas, Reno gives the state another marquee SSUSA tournament, the Rock 'N Reno Challenge Cup, the longest running senior softball tournament.

"Reno has its own niche that includes the beauty of Lake Tahoe down the road, local skiing, mountain hiking and a temperate climate with only 7.5 inches of precipitation per year," said Bravetti.

Along with Nevada, two other notable states popular with Senior Softball players are Colorado and Michigan.

Aided by its top-10 ranking in health care (7th) and top-20 score in quality of life (17th), Colorado ranked fifth in the Wallethub.com study and boasts 554 Senior Softball players.

"It's the best kept secret," said Terry Goodrich of Denver, manager of Scrap Iron 5280 (Men's 65 AAA) and vice president of Scrap

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**"Coming from New Mexico, the cost of living in Hawaii is definitely an issue for us."**

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**-Mike Sinnott**

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# SSUSA Designs New Ball for 2018

While rules tend to dominate most softball discussions (see the story on Page One), there are a number of other interesting developments for the 2018 season – including a new ball, new bats, new Official Shoe and an Official Uniform Supplier for the sport.

One of the most interesting developments for 2018 is that SSUSA is designing a new ball. The ball will be a micro-cell ball with a thin impervious layer under the cover to protect the core of the ball from moisture.

This change addresses the problem in hot and humid climates in which the current ball becomes softer and loses range. The ball specifications remain the same: 44 COR and 375 Compression.

The COR and Compression remain the same because the bat standards are based on those balls. We believe this new ball will retain its range in almost all climates – especially hot, humid climates.

The new balls are expected to be ready by February and will be a STOTE brand ball with the SSUSA logo. Current TRUMP balls will be available for sale and are still approved for use.

## New Bats for 2018

Bat manufacturers are unveiling their new models for 2018, and more manu-

## Covering the Bases

By Terry Hennessy

facturers are designing senior bats.

Easton, DeMarini and Louisville Slugger are coming back into the senior market in force, while Miken, Adidas and Dudley also have exciting new models.

Keep your eye on the Bat Ads and look for the new bats at major tournaments. Most major tournaments are sponsored by bat companies and they will have their newest models available for you to see.

## Adidas Official Shoe

Senior Softball USA has announced that Adidas is the Official Shoe.

As Official Shoe, Adidas will be selling shoes at most tournaments and supplying shoes for the coveted Triple Grand Slam winners.

Teams winning the Eastern or Western Nationals AND the US National Championship Game AND the World Masters Championships in 2018 will win a free pair of Adidas shoes.

Adidas will also be the Exclusive Bat sponsor at a number of major SSUSA tournaments this year.

## Elite Official Uniform

Elite Sports, longtime provider of Team USA uniforms for SSUSA international competition, has been named Official Uniform of Senior Softball USA.

Elite will also be supplying uniform shirts for teams winning in selected TOC Qualifiers this year.

The popular Elite-designed uniforms have been a hit with teams winning USA National Championships and the Eastern and Western National Championships in past seasons.

Elite has also teamed with Dudley to sponsor a number of major SSUSA tournaments in 2018.

These bat, ball, shoe and uniform companies underwrite sponsorships that allow us to grow the sport and provide high quality prizes in the many, many divisions competing in tournaments. Please support them when possible.

Thank you.

*Terry Hennessy is the Chief Executive Officer of Senior Softball USA and can be reached at [terryh@seniorsoftball.com](mailto:terryh@seniorsoftball.com).*

# HOF Inductions Held at Winter World Champs

There were two Hall of Fame inductions held during the opening ceremonies of the Winter World Championships on Nov. 14.

Daniel Minnick, of California, was inducted into the Senior Softball-USA Hall of Fame in the Player Category, while Lloyd Harper, of Arizona, was inducted into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame in the Pioneer Player Category.

Minnick, 76, who played with Scrap Iron Beams (Men's 75 Major) out of Colordao, in the Winter Worlds has had a long and illustrious SSUSA career playing



**Daniel Minnick, SSUSA HOF Class of 2017.**

with a number of Major Plus and Major teams.

He most recently helped lead

General Equipment (OR) to the Triple Grand Slam title in 2017 in the 75 Major division, winning both the Western National and World Masters Championships.

Harper, 84, was a longtime member of the Arizona Prospectors (75 and 80), while also playing previously with Fairway Ford, AZ Wranglers 70, and Mesa 65 Mustangs.

"As our centerfielder and leadoff hitter, he was consistently the team's leading scorer as well as the foundation of our defense," said Ted Sparks on Harper, a teammate from the Prospectors.



**Lloyd Harper, NSSHOF Class of 2017.**

# Opinions & Letters

## A Time to Give Thanks

Recently an 81-year-old player recalled going to a high school reunion. He said most of his classmates had a hard time moving around – and several had walkers or crutches. Most were overweight and complained about a myriad of health concerns.

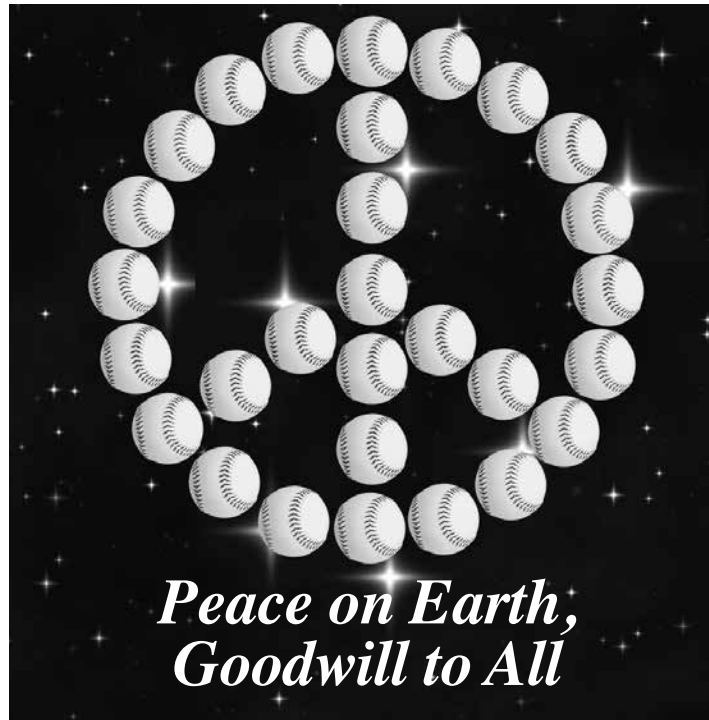
There was one other classmate in good shape.

He was the player's teammate.

That short story explains volumes about the fantastic benefits we derive from playing senior softball.

As ballplayers, we have a pretty simple reason to stay in shape: we want to continue playing ball as long as possible – like this 81-year-old.

But the benefits are immense. We live longer and, even more important, we enjoy a much better quality of



life. We can travel, we have friends on the team (and on other teams), and we have fewer health problems.

This all generates a much more positive outlook on life.

We are indeed lucky.

Sue Ballenger

The film Star Trek's character Spock has a now-famous saying: "Live Long and Prosper." I'd amend it a bit for senior softball players:

Live Long and Play.

**Terry Hennessy - Editor**

## Selfies to Screen for Pancreatic Cancer

By Pete Davignon

Traditionally, cancer prevention means making healthy lifestyle choices like not smoking, using sunscreen and eating healthy.

Now, researchers are also looking into cancer prevention on a molecular level, writes Cancer Today senior editor Marci A. Landsmann. Techniques like next-generation sequencing could help scientists analyze seemingly normal tissue and identify characteristics of premalignant lesions—cells on their way to becoming cancerous. Understand-

ing premalignant lesions may help researchers develop drugs to stop pre-cancers from becoming cancers, or screening tests to identify people at risk of developing cancer in the future.

BiliScreen is a new smartphone app designed to screen for pancreatic cancer by having users snap a selfie. Pancreatic cancer has one of the worst prognoses—a five-year survival rate of 9 percent—in part because there are no telltale symptoms, nor non-invasive screening tools to catch a tumor before it spreads.

One of the earliest symp-

oms of pancreatic cancer as well as other diseases is jaundice, a yellow discoloration of the skin and eyes caused by a buildup of bilirubin in the blood. The ability to detect signs of jaundice when bilirubin levels are minimally elevated, but before they're visible to the naked eye, could enable an entirely new screening program for at-risk individuals.

"The eyes are a really interesting gateway into the body—tears can tell you how much glucose you have, sclera can tell you how much bilirubin is in

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## Senior Softball News

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# CAN-Sirs: Aging and Cancer Intertwined

**Continued from Previous Page** your blood,” said senior author Shwetak Patel. BiliScreen uses a smartphone camera to detect increased bilirubin levels in a person’s sclera, or the white part of the eye. Increased levels of bilirubin are an early warning sign for pancreatic cancer. In adults, the whites of the eyes are more sensitive than skin to changes in bilirubin levels.

“The problem with pancreatic cancer is that by the time you are symptomatic, it’s frequently too late,” said lead author Alex Mariakakis, “The hope is that if people can do this simple test once a month in the privacy of their own homes some might catch the disease early enough to undergo treatment that could save their lives.” BiliScreen provides estimates of bilirubin levels in a person’s blood; elevated levels can be an early warning sign for pancreatic cancer, hepatitis and other diseases.

The blood test that doctors currently use to measure bilirubin levels is typically not administered to adults unless there is reason for concern, requires access to a health care professional, and is inconvenient for frequent screenings.

BiliScreen is designed to be an easy-to-use, non-invasive tool that could help determine whether someone ought to consult a doctor for further testing. Beyond diagnosis, BiliScreen could also potentially ease the burden on patients with pancreatic cancer who require frequent bilirubin monitoring.

“This initial study shows the technology has promise,” said co-author Dr. Jim Taylor, whose father died of pancreatic cancer at age 70.

“Pancreatic cancer is a terrible disease with no effective

screening right now,” Taylor said. “Our goal is to have more people who are unfortunate enough to get pancreatic cancer to be fortunate enough to catch it in time to have surgery that gives them a better chance of survival.” For more information, contact the research team at:

[uwbiliscreen@gmail.com](mailto:uwbiliscreen@gmail.com) or Mariakakis at [atm15@cs.washington.edu](mailto:atm15@cs.washington.edu).

BioDigital Human—a map for the human body. The Bio-Digital Human is a scientifically accurate cloud based virtual body that empowers everyone to learn about health and medicine in an entirely new visual format. Anatomy, disease and treatments are presented in an interactive 3D format that resembles life itself. Learn more at [www.biodigital.com](http://www.biodigital.com)

The median age of diagnosis varies in different cancer types—61 years for breast, 66 years for prostate, 68 years for colorectal, and 70 years for lung—but the disease can occur at any age. Bone cancer for example is most frequently diagnosed in people younger than 20 and neuroblastoma is more common in children than in adults.

Mutations and other changes in the genome—the information written in our DNA— is the root cause of cells becoming cancerous. When mutations disrupt genes that regulate cell division and growth, normal cells begin to grow uncontrollably. A trickle becomes a flood of abnormal cells that form tumors; additional mutations can disable tumor-suppressing proteins further aiding the renegade cells.

Usually a series of mutations



## CAN-SIRS CORNER

By Pete Davignon

in cancer-related genes occurs over many years before cells begin their malignant journey.

Why an aging body is more susceptible to cancer has no single explanation. One view is that cancer develops in older people simply because of their prolonged exposure to carcinogens such as sunlight, radiation, environmental chemicals, and substances in the food we eat. In addition, changes in tissues and organs with advancing age render cells’ microenvironment more favorable to the development of cancer.

The full picture of how aging and cancer are intertwined is still a work in progress. We can’t hold back the hands of time, but researchers say that managing chronic conditions and making lifestyle changes in middle age and beyond can modify cancer risk.

These changes include increasing physical activity, spending less time sitting, getting good sleep, eating a healthy diet, moderating alcohol use, and quitting smoking. Doing so can reduce cancer risk and increase the odds of what researchers call “successful aging.”

CAN-Sirs thanks all our friends for their continued support over the past years which helps us carry on our mission of cancer awareness and prevention. We will be fielding a team for CAN-Sirs in the upcoming season.

If you are interested in being notified and want to participate, send us an email at [CAN-Sirs@att.net](mailto:CAN-Sirs@att.net)

# Carl: Beauty of Senior Softball

**Continued from Page 3** Navy-style if you dare go crossways with him.

His birthday party was a roll call of league and tournament softball players, many of whom used his salty image in a jamboree of jocular gaiety.

One thing was evident, he is deeply admired and loved, and that is why he is still so vibrantly alive. This is the beauty of senior softball.

When so many our age wither and fade away, clinging to memories no one else cares about, and becoming more and more isolated, and finally relegated to nursing homes and inglorious fades into death, there is our softball society.

It offers a glowing lifestyle, not just a game but a society and brotherhood that bustles and burgeons like a perpetual party, where we can wallow in friendships and thrill to victory, where we can continue to grow in all phases of life, and finally die within the embrace of our fellow revelers.

At 94, Larry Blanken-ship has not only become symbolic of why we play this senior game, but is the beacon leading the way through the end game, showing us how to make our last years our best years.

*Carl Gustafson is Senior Softball - USA's Southern California Director.*

# Dowell, Davis, and Gano Earn The Call to The SSUSA Hall of Fame

AUBURN, ALA. –Senior Softball USA announced three 2018 inductees into the SSUSA Hall of Fame here Dec. 1.

The inductees include SSUSA Executive Director Fran Dowell of California, Bobby Davis of Florida in the Player category and Diana Gano of Arizona in the Manager Category.

Dowell was elected into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame in 2015.

She has been involved in Senior Softball since 1998 and became the first female executive director of a major softball organization in 2006. She previously served as SSUSA's national tournament director and marketing director.

In both 2009 and 2012, Dowell received the National Award of Excellence from Sports Events Magazine as one of the top 12 sports promoters in America.

For the past decade, she has guided the largest senior tournaments in the sport, including the World Master Championships, which drew 612 teams to Las Vegas this year.



**Fran Dowell, SSUSA Executive Director**

Davis, who will be inducted into the Player Category, has been



**Mark Jackson Receives the SSUSA Award of Excellence.**

inducted in both the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame and the ISA Hall of Fame.

He was named MVP on several international trips for his hitting, pitching and fielding.

He has been a true ambassador of the sport in Japan, China, Taiwan, Cuba, Spain, Germany, and a number of other countries.

Davis has won 12 MVP, All World and All American selections and his teams have won World and National tournaments at the highest level.



**Bobby Davis**

Gano, who will be inducted into the Manager category, founded the Senior Saints in Arizona in 1999 as a non-profit corporation to promote softball for senior women.

The Saints organization grew quickly, and by 2004 had four women's teams, ranging in age from 40 to 60. That year the Saints 40 team won the World Championships in Phoenix and the Winter Worlds in Las Vegas.

The Silver Saints, a 55-plus team, were undefeated champions in the Major Division of the Senior Softball World Series. Additionally, they won several gold medals at the Phoenix Senior Olympics and Prescott Senior Olympics.

Gano also was the first National Women's Director for SSUSA.



**Diana Gano**

The three inductees will go

into the Senior Softball USA International Hall of Fame during its 2018 Convention in Las Vegas from Nov. 27-30.

Two 2017 SSUSA Hall of Fame inductees were not able to attend the convention for health reasons. Dan Minnick, elected in the Player Category, was inducted during the Winter World Championships in Phoenix in November (see page 5). Norm Blackwell was elected in the Manager category and will be inducted during the Reno Challenge Cup in June 2018.

The top SSUSA award for the year, the Award of Excellence, went to Mark Jackson and Central Florida's Polk County Sports Marketing (PCSM). Jackson and PCSM were instrumental in developing the Tournament of Champions concept and have been strong supporters of SSUSA for almost two decades.

Other winners announced in the Auburn Convention included:

- Executive Director's Award: Frank Short of BSN
- Tournament Director of Year: Paul Cochet of California
- Umpire of Year: Shane Verley of Washington
- Regional Director of Year: Nancy Allen of Indiana
- Softball Complex of the Year: Arroyo Grande in Henderson, Nev.



**Nancy Allen Named SSUSA Regional Director of the Year.**

# RULES: Major Plus Division Consistent Across the Board

**Continued from Page 1** strikes) or go to a 1-1 count (3 balls and two strikes) for some of the younger senior divisions. There was also heated discussion on whether to allow a “waste foul” if the 1-1 count was approved.

The “waste foul” means if a batter fouls the ball for the second strike, the batter is not out.

Proponents said the waste foul would make any change to the 1-1 count more palatable to the Senior divisions, many of whom were used to playing with the 1-1 count that included foul to waste. Proponents said it would also result in fewer hits up the middle. Opponents disagreed that it was any more of a safety issue than a batter facing an out with a third strike. Opponents also pointed to the 40 Masters 1-1 count with no waste foul, which appeared to be popular.

The committee tabled further action until a player preference survey could be completed to help determine player opinion. A previous survey on pitch counts taken

six years ago showed overwhelming support for the 1-1 count in then 40 Masters with decidedly declining support in older age groups.

The committee will discuss the survey results in January and vote on various pitch count proposals at that time.

In other action, the Rules Committee voted to allow 85+ teams to use 12 defensive players, clarified that a pitcher’s mask must extend from above the eyes to the lower part of the chin, extended the use of mitts (which had been restricted to first basemen and catchers) to all players, and made the 40 Masters Major-Plus rules consistent with Senior Major-Plus rules.

The rules that change for the 40 Masters Major-Plus division include going to 7 run limits per inning, a 15-runs-after five innings mercy rule, and no snowbird players, but two out of region players allowed on the roster.

In a move to speed up the games so that more innings are played, the Committee changed the Courtesy Runner

rule, mandating that Courtesy Runners be inserted before the first pitch to any batter.

The committee also directed SSUSA staff to identify Major-Plus teams that continually dominate divisions, to analyze Women’s 40 Master rosters to determine whether there were enough players to go to both 40 and 45 divisions, and to come up with a recommendation for co-ed Rules.

SSUSA currently has no co-ed Rules, but is expecting some co-ed international teams to compete in the World Masters Championships in Las Vegas in 2018.

In other action, the committee rejected a proposal to soften the penalty for using an illegal bat, and a proposal to move the strike mat back 8.5 inches.

The committee considered, but did not act upon 18 other recommendations from players and officials.

For a complete list of Rules Committee Action, please visit <https://seniorsoftball.com/wc/wc2017/SSUSA-Rules-Minutes-2017.pdf>



**Ron Grassi, SSUSA National Director and Northwest UIC, providing instruction.**

## China: Certifying Clubs and Instructors

**Continued from Page 3** football fields on the shores of the lake, hundreds of townspeople gather in the evening in small groups of 10 to 30 each to happily dance in joint step to vastly different music. Some dress in traditional garments, others dance holding round fans, and all laugh and dance in simple human joy.

It is in this culture that American teeball and softball has taken root.

SSUSA/China has plans to run camps and clinics throughout China, for Chinese students to travel to Japan and the U.S. in 2018. In addition, SSUSA/China will be certifying 240 men and women who are currently enrolled in a two-year college course to become instructors.

One of the top needs in the program is for qualified instructors.

SSUSA/China will also be certifying softball and teeball clubs in China and providing instructional materials.

SSUSA is committed to help grow this American sport in China because the values of sportsmanship and teamwork provide a common foundation for developing international friendship and understanding.

## The One-Legged Softball Dream

Carol Wehner’s indomitable spirit keeps her playing even after she lost her leg in a softball accident.

Wehner, 43, played against the Senior Softball USA teams that competed in June in Munich during the Bavarian Classic.

“She won our respect and our hearts,” said Terry Hennessy, SSUSA’s chief executive officer.

Now Wehner is campaigning to raise enough money to buy a

special athletic prosthetic leg that would allow her to continue playing softball. Her insurance only covers a conventional artificial leg every 5 years and using the conventional leg to play sports causes it to wear out every year.

Wehner has established a Go Fund Me Page here:

<https://www.gofundme.com/the-one-legged-softball-dream>



**Carol Wehner pictured with the sport prosthetic she would like to have.**



# Determining Dominant Swing Arm

By Art Eversole

Is there a dominant arm in the softball swing, or do both arms contribute equally to the effort?

I contend, from years of functioning as a swing coach in senior softball, that there is a dominant arm in the swing, and it's the hitter's front-side arm. This lead-arm role is much the same as found in the pro golf swing where the arm nearest the target is controlling the swing.

The amazing Babe Ruth (a fervent golfer) once said: "My baseball swing is nearly the same as my golf swing, with the notable exceptions of plane and stride".

From viewing a multitude of YouTube softball instructional hitting videos, I discovered that many pro softball players also believe that the hitter's lead-arm is what powers the swing.

The lead-arm is also the arm that provides the all-important leverage in the softball swing. A well leveraged swing will have

the lead-arm nearly fully extended at contact with the back-arm in the slot position (tucked into rib cage), forming a triangle with the arms creating the proper launch angle for power.

I do understand that there remains a school of thought by some coaches who strongly insist that the top-hand/back-arm is the dominant limb during the swing. I believe this theory to be flawed and here's why.

I've witnessed players using the top-hand dominance method for years and these swings actually end abruptly out in front of their body with a truncated follow-through. The effect of a top-hand dominant swing is: reduced bat-speed, an abbreviated follow-through, and killing both power and lift.

In a lead-arm dominant swing, the top-hand should take on a passive role until contact. Before contact the top-hand helps unweight the bat for the pulling lead-arm enabling a faster swing, while keeping the bat on the cor-

rect plane to the incoming pitch.

The top-hand also assists the hands to the ball (while maintaining bat-lag) by applying force to the lead-hand until contact and then is released from the bat. However, the top-hand does play a major role in the explosive hand-action right at the point of contact.

Remember to keep the top-hand somewhat loose on the bat handle because too much tension will have a tendency for the hitter to release the wrists prematurely. Thus, a failure to not keep a loose grip with the top-hand can result in the bat being "casted" off your back shoulder, removing lag and losing power. The goal here is to create, maintain and release bat-lag for maximum power and bat-speed, using a lead-arm dominant swing.

Note that the accomplished hitter does apply a torquing action with both hands on the bat handle during the swing. This method has the effect of allowing the hands to move faster to the

ball creating additional bat-speed.

This technique produces a strong rolling wrist action. The torquing of the hands will sling-shot the bat-barrel to the incoming ball, producing a snap rather than a slow sweeping action with the bat.

I maintain it is more efficient to pull the bat around in a circle than to push the bat. By pulling the bat from the knob with the lead-arm allows the hitter to continue to accelerate the bat around their body. The lead-arm swing technique is controlled from the bat-knob creating a full-circular movement of the bat.

Inspect the supporting photo sequence attachment demonstrated by Brett Kreuger, and follow the circular-path of the bat-knob represented by the large bubbles.

Click on this link to re-visit all my hitting articles since 2011: <http://www.bashman01nwse-niorsoftball.com/hitting-articles>

Happy hitting

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# Balance Pull and Push Strength to Avoid Rotator Cuff Injury

By Stan Reents, Senior Softball News Contributor

In my earlier columns, I've covered general aspects of aerobic fitness, muscular fitness, and stretching and flexibility. Now, let's focus specifically on the shoulder.

Whipping a ball from the outfield to home plate puts a tremendous strain on the shoulder joint and those associated muscles.

Here are some training tips to strengthen the shoulder and hopefully prevent injuries:

These are some concepts developed by trainer Michael Boyle. He owns a gym in Boston where he has trained elite athletes in a variety of sports. In 2012, Boyle joined the Boston Red Sox as a strength and conditioning coach. They won the World Series in 2013.

Boyle says it's just as important to develop strength in muscle groups that stabilize a joint as it is to develop the muscles responsible for executing the movement.

Boyle explains that force is transmitted posteriorly between your hips and your shoulders in a diagonal manner so that the left hip provides stability for the right shoulder. Thus, a variety of upper-back exercises in Boyle's programs require the athlete to stand on one leg while performing them. This activates many of the stabilizer muscles in the lower body. He is also a big proponent of core strength.

Regarding shoulder strength, a fundamental Boyle principle here is that pushing strength and pulling strength should be roughly equal.

Many players overdevelop their pushing strength (bench press) and ignore their pulling strength (chin-ups, rowing). Boyle says that this scenario is a formula for injuring the rotator cuff of the shoulder.

To improve the pulling strength of the shoulder, Boyle recommends chin-ups (palm facing you) and rowing exercises. Chin-ups involve vertical pulling; rowing exercises are horizontal pulling.

For chin-ups, he recommends working your way up to 10 reps. When an athlete can do more than 10 in a row, he adds weights, typically by wearing a weight belt. Generally, he recommends doing multiple sets of only three to five chin-ups per set.

The rowing exercises he likes are bent-over rows and hanging from rings or TRX suspension trainers. Doing bent-over rows with a barbell should be avoided: this stresses the back too much. Instead, a single dumbbell should be used so that you can place your free hand on a bench. Both feet are on the ground, or, you can place your knee of the same side as your free hand on the bench. Either way, this provides support for your spine like a table with three legs.

For hanging exercises, your body is in a horizontal, supine position lying on the floor with feet together. Pull your chest up to your hands without bending at the knees or the waist. As strength improves, do this exercise with your heels elevated on a box, always keeping your body straight.

It's still OK to do bench-press. Just make sure you also include chin-ups and rowing exercises to achieve balance between pushing and pulling strength.

For more training wisdom from Mike Boyle, see his excellent book *"New Functional Training for Sports"* (Human Kinetics, 2016). Chapter 8 explains these exercises in greater detail.

*ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Stan Reents, PharmD, is a health care professional and certified health coach. He created the web site [www.AthleteInMe.com](http://www.AthleteInMe.com)®, a resource on the health benefits of exercise. He is also the author of the sports medicine text "Sport and Exercise Pharmacology."*

# GE Reinvents with Dividend Slash

By Jack Sirard

By Wall Street standards, General Electric's decision to slash its dividend in half in November was one of the most telegraphed moves in recent memory.

Yet despite the fact that most of the smart money on The Street knew it was coming, GE's stock price was hammered.

GE had long ago announced that it would be hosting its annual investor meeting on Nov. 13 and investors from the largest financial institutions to individuals with just a few shares to their names tuned in to see what the corporate giant had to say.

Over the past year or so, shares of General Elec-

tric have dropped more than 30 percent during a time in which the overall market has seeming hit record high after record high.

Admittedly, the new CEO John Flannery has a hell of a challenge in front of him.

From the looks of what he told investors back in November, there are no sacred cows being protected in GE.

He started out by slashing the dividend, lowering profit estimates and announcing a corporate restructuring. Another smart thing he did, I think, was to pare the number of seats on the board of directors and announced a 25 percent reduction in the home office so that some real work can be done.

The board of directors will be reduced from 18 to 12 and directors will have 15-year term limits which means new blood and new ideas will be ensured.

While I viewed all of that as positive news for investors long-term, practically everyone else saw it the other way and pummeled the stock, sending shares down more than 7 percent in a single day of heavy trading. It was the stock's worst day since 2009 when the housing bubble burst.

Certainly no corporate exec wants to be known as the "guy who cut our dividend" and Flannery confessed that it was "extremely painful" to halve the quarterly payout to just 12 cents a share, down from 24 cents. The company also announced a \$3 billion share buyback commitment which over time will help boost earnings per share.

He noted that this was the opportunity of a lifetime to reinvent the 125-year-old company and said that going forward GE would concentrate on health care, aviation and energy. That means that its wide array of other business concentrations such as media, railroads, chemicals, marine engines and bank-

ing would be put on the sales block.

The company now sees adjusted earnings for next year of about \$1.00 to \$1.07 a share and free cash flow still at significantly reduced levels of \$6 billion to \$7 billion, which it pledged to improve.

GE, whose stock is rumored to be in danger of being dropped from the prominent Dow Jones 30 industrials after a 100-year run, now sees its stock price trading down to \$17.18, far off its 52-week high of \$32.38.

With the dividend cut, the stock is currently yielding about 2.7 percent, which gives it a bit of appeal.

I like the stock at these levels and took a position in it the day after Flannery made his plans public. The stock certainly isn't for those without a long-term investment horizon as the company still faces a very shaky future.

Could it go down more? You bet, but if Flannery is right, the could prove to be a good time to own shares of one of America's best known corporate names.

*Jack Sirard is a retired nationally syndicated financial columnist and senior editor for Senior Softball USA.*

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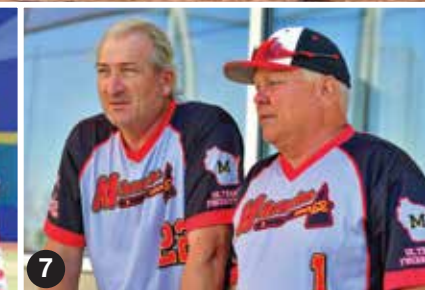
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# 2017 WORLD MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIPS: LAS VEGAS, NEVADA



1. SSUSA Umpires pose for a photo between games. 2. Fran Dowell, SSUSA Executive Director given a gift from Guam teams. 3. Color Guard. 4. Guam players enjoying a game from the stands. 5. Dreamgirlz (VA) celebrates a win. 6. Player from Stix With Impact rounding third. 7. Players from the Milwaukee Merchants. 8. Player from Above the Law (MO) camps under a fly ball with the Las Vegas skyline in the background. 9. Arizona Aces firstbaseman applies the tag for the out. 10. Still Swinging 4.0 player beats the runner to first.



(Women's 50).

Guam Seniors 50 (Men's 50 AAA) was honored with the sponsorship award during the opening ceremonies of the third session.

B.O.O.B.'s 40 (CA) and Dreamgirlz (VA) highlighted the fourth session, as the teams took home the Triple Grand Slam title, winning the Women's 40 AA and the Women's 50 Major divisions, respectively.

Another key highlight featured Bud Light Guam, who held off Color By Design (MD), 18-16, which scored seven runs in the bottom of the open, to win the Men's 40 AAA division. The historic victory was first for a team from the tiny island nation.

To read more on Bud Light Guam's win, go to <http://www.guampdn.com/story/sports/2017/10/09/guams-unlikely-softball-championship-very-monumental/745312001/>

To read the full tournament recap per each session that appeared in the Newsletter, please visit the following links on [SeniorSoftball.com](http://SeniorSoftball.com)

- <https://seniorsoftball.com/?news&story=1352>
- <https://seniorsoftball.com/?news&story=1359>
- <https://seniorsoftball.com/?news&story=1360>
- <https://seniorsoftball.com/?news&story=1363>

Photos by Jack Eberhard

## WMC: Bud Light Guam Makes History

**Continued from Page 1**  
 session of the tournament with a total of 194 teams playing in 632 games, kicked off the tournament Sept. 22 – 24.  
 The opening ceremonies of the first session was highlighted by the inductions of Gary Deaton and Jon "Bully" Kramer into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame (NSSHOF) in the Player Category.  
 Two teams also completed the elusive Triple Grand Slam, as MTC 60's/ Dudley (CA) and Omega IT Services.

LLC (MD) each accomplished the feat, in the Men's 60 Major Plus and 60 Major divisions, respectively.  
 The World Masters continued with the second session, Sept. 25-28, with the Men's 65 – 85 age divisions. A total of 144 teams played in 463 games during the second session.  
 The opening ceremonies of the second session was highlighted by 10 additional inductions into the NSSHOF,

as Ed Carey, Billy Mack Lough, Dale McLaughlin, and Bob Ross were inducted into the Player Category; Robert Davis, Norman Haltrich, Kenneth Lockman, and James Phillips were inducted into the Pioneer Player Category; Pat Carey was inducted into the Manager Category; and Terry Hennessy was inducted into the Director Category.  
 Additionally, eight teams, Timberworks/Adidas (CA) – Men's 65 Major Plus; New Jersey Hitmen – Men's 65 Major; Venom (FL) – Men's 70 Major Plus; Sacramento Buds (CA) – Men's 70 AA; San Francisco Seals (CA) – Men's 75 Major Plus; General Equipment (OR) – Men's 75 Major; Florida Investment

Properties – Men's 80 Major; and Redwood City Gold Rush (CA) – Men's 80 AAA all secured the Triple Grand Slam honor.  
 The Men's 50 division continued the tournament, Sept. 29 – Oct. 1, as 152 teams played in 504 games. The third session also featured the largest division in tournament history, as 85 teams competed in the Men's 50 AAA division, won by Roadhouse Blues/BP & Associates (PA).  
 Roadhouse Blues/BP & Associates and J.K. Inc./Miken (CA), Men's 50 Major Plus, also captured the Triple Grand Slam.

The World Masters concluded Oct. 6 – Oct. 8 with the Men's 40 and all the Women's divisions. There were 398 games scheduled with 122 teams in action.  
 During the opening ceremonies of the fourth session, six teams from Guam were recognized with the Steve Simmons Memorial Sportsmanship of the Year Award: Armed Forces Guam (Men's 40 Major), Bud Light Guam (Men's 40 AAA), Sindalun Guahan (Men's 40 AAA), Guam Women's - FIGO Islanders (Women's 40 AAA), Guam Women's - Team SOTTA (Women's 40 AA), and Guam Women's - Team Mighty 50's



Bud Light Guam pitcher celebrates the final out in the "if" game of the 18-team Men's 40 AAA bracket.

# Record Fourteen Teams Secure Triple Grand Slam Titles at the 2017 WMC

The 2017 season set a record for Triple Grand Slam winners, as 14 teams completed the exclusive task of winning either the Eastern/Western National Championship, the U.S. National Championship Game, and the World Masters Championship.

This year's Triple Grand Slam winners include: B.O.O.B.'s, CA 40 Women; Dreamgirlz, VA 50 Women; J.K. Inc/Miken, CA 50; Roadhouse Blues/BP & Associates, PA 50; MTC/Dudley, CA 60; Omega IT Services, MD 60; Timberworks/Adidas, CA 65; New Jersey Hitmen, 65; Venom, FL 70; Sacramento Buds, CA 70; San Francisco Seals, CA 75; General Equipment, OR 75; Florida Investment Properties, 80; Redwood City Gold Rush, CA 80.

For both Dreamgirlz and San Francisco Seals, this marks the fifth straight Triple Grand Slam title for each team.

## **All Time Triple Grand Slam Winners**

**2016**  
Smack That, CA W 40AAA  
Dreamgirlz, MD W 50  
Sommerville Softball, CA 50  
Hollis Appraisals, FL 60  
San Francisco Seals, CA 75  
Sacramento Gold, CA 80

**2015**  
Kiss Our Stix, CA W 40AAA  
Dreamgirlz, MD W 50  
Sommerville Softball, CA 50  
Summy's, CA 55  
Top Gun III, CA 60  
Omen, CA 70  
PDR Fastsigns, OR 75  
San Francisco Seals, CA 75  
Florida Investment Prop. 80

**2014**  
Dreamgirlz, MD 50W  
MBA Elite, CA 60  
Superior Senior Softball, VA 60  
Vacar Stars, VA 70  
Omen, CA 70  
Syracuse Cyclones, NY 70

San Francisco Seals, CA 75  
Center for Sight, FL 85

**2013**  
Dreamgirlz, MD 50W  
Ohio Silverados, OH 60  
Hamel Builders/Superior, VA 65  
San Francisco Seals, CA 75

**2012**  
Omega QSE Construction, MD 55  
W.E. Ruth Realty, WA 60  
Hamel Builders/Turn 2, VA 65  
Syracuse Cyclones, NY 65  
Pinnacle Physical Therapy, AZ 70  
Syracuse Cyclones, NY 75  
California Spirit, CA 55W  
California Spirit, CA 60W

**2011**  
Bay State Bombers, MA 55  
MTC Softball Club, CA 60  
Steel Dawgs, OH 60  
Omen Softball, CA 65  
San Francisco Seals, CA 70  
Hamel Cavaliers, VA 70  
Triple Play, CA 70  
State Roofing, CA 75  
Center for Sight, FL 80

**2010**  
Center for Sight, FL 80  
Florida Legends/Human Kinetics 65  
PDR/Fastsigns, OR 70  
Spot Bar & Grille, OR 50

**2009**  
Blaine County Title, ID 60  
CJ & S Express, AZ 50  
Florida Legends/Human Kinetics 65  
Kar Phone/TKP, CA 40W  
Roberts Construction, WI 55  
Sidewinders, AZ 70

**2008**  
2nd Wind, CA 50W  
Back Office Associates, MA 70  
Ca\$h 4 College, NJ 65  
JK, Inc., CA 40  
Joeseppi's/Bellettini, WA 70  
NorCal Bluejays, CA 65  
NY Motion 55  
Robson Ranch, AZ 60  
Shawn Montee Timber, ID 50

Syracuse Merchants, NY 55  
Tiodize D-99, CA 80  
Turn 2, NC 60

**2007**  
All Star Ford Masters, WA 40  
California Spirit 50W  
California Spirit 55W  
Las Vegas Neons, NV 60  
San Francisco Seals, CA 70  
Texas Classic 75  
WE Ruth Realty, WA 65

**2006**  
Ladies Choice CA 50W  
Roaddogs CA 50  
WE Ruth WA 55  
Scrap Iron/Worth CO 55  
Moran & Company MI 65

**2005**  
Double Play CA 50  
Scrap Iron CO 60  
Chicago Classics Red IL 50  
Florida Investment Properties 70  
Cornwall 75's MI 75

**2004**  
California Spirit 50W  
California Spirit 55W  
Old A's CA 55  
The Farm CA 55  
Bickerton Iron Works CA 60  
Northwest 75's WA 75

**2003**  
Showtime CA 40W  
WE Ruth Realty WA 50  
Fairway Ford CA 65  
Emerald City Masters WA 65  
Dream Team MI 60  
West Michigan Sportsmen 65  
Mitchell's Construction PA 70  
Syracuse Cyclones NY 70

**2002**  
California Spirit Majors 55W  
Coca Cola Classics WI 60

**2001**  
SF Seals, CA 65  
Jimmy Dukes, CA 65



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# U.S. National Championship Game Winners

The U.S. National Championship game, the second leg of the Triple Grand Slam, pits the winner of the Western National Championships against the winner of the Eastern National Championships in each respective division during seeding play of the LVSSA/SSUSA World Masters Championships.

There were a total of 17 U.S. National Championship games held during the 2017 World Masters.

Overall, the West held a 10-7 edge over the East.

## U.S. National Game Scores

Kryptonite (FL) defeated Old School (CA), 23-12, (Women's 40 Major)

Utah Relics defeated Fireballs (MA), 19-17, (Women's 40 AAA)

SofaKing Softball/Elite (CA)

defeated East Coast Berserk/LB (MD), 24-20, (Men's 40 Major)

Color By Design (MD) defeated No Limit/Fay's Sports (CA), 22-12, (Men's 40 AAA)

J.K. Inc./Miken 50 (CA) defeated Mid-Atlantic Softball (VA), 27-9, (Men's 50 Major Plus)

KM Sportz (CA) defeated Ohio Elite/A&B, 38-29, (Men's 50 Major)

Roadhouse Blues/BP & Associates (PA) defeated Calhoun/Michael's Toyota (WA), 12-5, (Men's 50 AAA)

Doerflinger (WA) defeated Woodlawn Funeral Home (VA), 19-15, (Men's 55 Major)

Senior Bend Elks (OR) defeated Ameriprise Florida Legends, 24-23, (Men's 55 AAA)

Pastimers (WA) defeated

Longshoremen 55 (VA), 15-14, (Men's 55 AA)

MTC 60's/Dudley (CA) defeated Hollis Appraisals 60's (FL), 27-24, (Men's 60 Major Plus)

Omega IT Services, LLC (MD) defeated Houston Fire (TX), 26-17, (Men's 60 Major)

Mountain Mike's Pizza (CA) defeated Pompano Crush 60's (FL), 15-14, (Men's 60 AAA)

Timberworks/Adidas (CA) defeated Superior Senior Softball (VA), 32-17, (Men's 65 Major Plus)

New Jersey Hitmen defeated Nor-Cal Stixx 65 (CA), 20-19, (Men's 65 Major)

Northern Virginia Force defeated Oregon Crabs, 27-14, (Men's 65 AAA)

Venom (FL) defeated Omen 70 (CA), 25-15, (Men's 70 Major Plus)

# Seven Guam Teams Earn Steve Simmons Memorial Sportsmanship of the Year Award

Seven teams from Guam were recognized with the top award given by SSUSA annually, the Steve Simmons Memorial Sportsmanship of the Year Award.

## The honorees included:

- Guam Seniors 50 (Men's 50 AAA)
- Armed Forces Guam (Men's 40 Major)
- Bud Light Guam (Men's 40 AAA)
- Sindalun Guahan (Men's 40 AAA)
- Guam Women's - FIGO Islanders (Women's 40 AAA)
- Guam Women's - Team SOTTA (Women's 40 AA)
- Guam Women's - Team Mighty 50's (Women's 50)

"We are deeply humbled and grateful to be chosen as the recipients of 2017 Steve Simmons Memorial Sportsmanship Award," said Michelle Perez, manager of Guam Team SOTTA. "It is a great honor for all the Guam Teams to be chosen and recognized in all divisions for this meaningful award."

"Thank you to the Senior Softball-USA organization for continuing to

provide the Guam teams with the opportunity to represent our island."

"This award transcends the game itself," said Terry Hennessy, SSUSA CEO. "It stands for all that is good in the sport: passionate competition played with good humor and good fellowship - that is the formula for good sportsmanship. The beauty of good sportsmanship is that it incites a love of the game for all who witness it."

"The teams from Guam have demonstrated the highest level of sportsmanship and provide an example to teams throughout the sport."

## Previous Steve Simmons Memorial Sportsmanship of the Year Winners

- 2005 – Conklin Brothers, CA 40 (West)  
Sweet Construction, NJ 50 (East)
- 2006 – River Hawks, CA 80
- 2007 – Roberts Construction, WI 50
- 2008 – Sportaculars of Canada 65
- 2009 – Scrap Iron Club of Colorado
- 2010 – NM High Desert Roadrunners 65
- 2011 – Georgia/Alabama Masters 60
- 2012 – Minnesota Prize 65's

2013 – Hannington's 55's, MA

2014 – 50 Caliber St. Louis Softball Club, MO

2015 – Git-R-Done Softball Club, CA

2016 – San Antonio Silver Streaks, TX



Guam Team SOTTA Receives Steve Simmons Sportsmanship Award.

# World Masters All-Tournament Team

## First Session

### Men's 60 Major Plus

**MTC 60s/Dudley (CA):** Perry Carubba (Team MVP), Bob Gatehouse, Kevin O'Reilly, Dave Matusich, Ronald Chenier. / **Nighthawks (CA):** Joe Hensley, Mike Lorden, Wayne Galer, Dane Barriault. / **Hollis Appraisals 60s (FL):** Mike Monnier, Randy Parker, Lawrence Reedus, Jr. / **Old Dawgs (CA):** Steve Hillman, Lyman Rose.

### Men's 60 Major

**Omega IT Services, LLC (MD):** Preston Phillips, Marvin Middleton, Charles Clarke, Hosea Harris, Edward Parker. / **Houston Fire:** Tony Washington, Robert Schulz, Mike Francis. / **Old Giants (CA):** Bob Calhoun, Anthony Hinojosa.

### Men's 60 AAA

**Bucky's Casino 60s (AZ):** Michael Cosgrove, Rich Marcin, Doug Royse, Clyde (Skip) Kyle. / **Carriage Homes (AR):** Ramsey (Randy) Harris, Doug Rodgers.



Player from Bucky's Casino going for the fences.

### Men's 60 AA

**Dallas Spurs (TX):** Al Schoelen, David Sampson, Michael Beard, Clarence McCraw, (Wade Moran - Team MVP). / **The Family (NV):** Albert Rozzi Jr., Marco Caldana, Greg Solomon. / **50th State Seniors (HI):** Mike Sinnot, Ray Peterson.

### Men's 55 Major Plus

**CornerStone (OR):** Rich Bass, Dave Dahilig, Randy Holbrook, Barney Lewis, Gary Springer. / **Sommerville (CA):** Ronni Salcedo, Chito Alviderez, Danny Arealvos. / **San Antonio Softball Club (TX):** Mickey Rodriguez, Bobby Gilbert.

### Men's 55 Major

**RBC/Pro-Grass (FL):** (Team MVP - Kevin Lutz), Jose Armas, Roger

Bard, Gerard Blair, Dennis Russo, Manny Queipo, Luis Sanchez. / **J & J Sports (IA):** Tim Anderson, Greg Azbill, Vince Bruce, Mike Carper, (Joe Kayser - Team MVP). / **So Cal 55:** Fernando Hill, Eric Prevost, Jimmy Williams.

### Men's 55 AAA

**TMS Michigan:** Joseph Gould, Charles Modd, Daniel Wolfram, Jeff Moon, Kevin Haarsma. / **Old Stars (IN):** Dave Rachau, Bob Cash, Jeff Horn. / **Senior Bend Elks (OR):** Steve Brenton, Rick Baker.

### Men's 55 AA

**Spin Tees (WA):** James Rush, John Hendrick

## Second Session

### Men's 65 Major Plus

**Superior Senior Softball (VA):** Andrew Zitnay, Steve Pierson, John Davide, James "Ron" Collins. / **Omen (CA):** Ocie Wesley, Ricky Harris, Marlin Harris. / **Rose/Hollis Appraisals 65's (FL):** Norm Edwards, Jim Wiley, (Jack Lambert - Team MVP).

### Men's 65 Major

**New Jersey Hitmen:** Jeff Hitt, Dave Hawkins, John Ryan, Dale Hood, Tom Tashea. / **Enviro-Vac Marauders (BC, Canada):** Rick Parker, Dave Dockstader, Ralph Tipton, Peter Sheen. / **San Antonio Silver Streaks (TX):** Sergio Angulo, Domingo Garcia, (Julian Tamez - Team MVP).

### Men's 65 AAA

**Ryan's Way (NV):** Larry Larson, Larry Giese, Mike Marshall, Rob Taylor. / **Minnesota Masters:** Gary Bennett, Ronald Schwanz, Mike Trewick.

### Men's 65 AA

**Franklin Loan Center (CA):** Dave Kallok, Dave Emanuelson, Bill Leitch. / **Chicago Hitmen 65s (IL):** Warren York, Archie Aaron, Rick Masino (MVP).

### Men's 70 Major Plus

**Venom (FL):** Vincent Melograno, James Davidson, Bob Schreyer, Dennis Schroeder, Ed Sparkman. / **Omen (CA):** John Di Re, Bob Hough, Rich Schmidt, Joe Cors, (Bob Cummings - Team MVP).



Player from Oregon Crabs looks to flash some leather.

### Men's 70 Major

**SoCal Gusto:** Steve Wilson, Ray Fly, Tom Aguilar, Jon Arem, Mike Young. / **California Wrecking Crew:** Garry Dovenberg, Jim Laurenti, John Melvin, Harold Johnson. / **Tri-State Diamondbacks (NM):** Paul Allen, Roger Assink, Les Poland. / **Sons of Pitches (CA):** Jerry Herling, Dave Taylor (Joe Bruno - Team MVP).

### Men's 70 AAA

**Game On (CA):** Jim Langley (MVP), Billy Boswell, Don Brazell, Mike Gentry, Don Heyfron, Jim Jackson. / **San Antonio Legends (TX):** Earlie Satterwhite, Joe Flores, Mike Salazar, Ricardo Castillo, (Ronald Henderson - Team MVP).

### Men's 70 AA

**Sacramento Buds:** Ted LaTona, Frank Newcross, George Garcia, Robert Nishimoto, Bob Riola, (Lee Marshal - Team MVP). / **El Paso Nine-Elevens (TX):** Robert Ward, Manny Zepeda, Ramon Zepeda.

### Men's 75 Major Plus

**San Francisco Seals:** Bill Wilson, Jerry Ford, Herb Epple, Bob Hannah, Bob Banchemo. / **W.E. Ruth Realty 75 (WA):** Joe Simpson, Jerry Bergquist, Ron Mattila, Ron Riedasch, MVP - Doug Blatchford.

### Men's 75 Major

**General Equipment (WA):** Mike Alley, Bill Johnson, Fred White, James McAbee, Bob Quarantino. / **Scrap Iron Beams (CO):** Don Burden, J.C. Moore, Ron Howard, Joe DeCristofaro, (Don Pierson - Team MVP). / **Hawaiian Pride:** Daniel Ayala, Dennis Holland, Herbert Leite. / **Canterbury Cruisers (MI):** Ronald Sanner, Ray Dye.

### Men's 75 AAA

**Las Vegas Coyotes (NV):** John

Bellavia, Larry Miller, Robbie Robinson, Joe Upperman, Bill Walsh, MVP-Jeff Wagner. / **New Concepts I (NM):** Geno Fernandez, John Fraser, Tom Gill, Zane Smith. / **Arizona Outlaws:** Ben Ledohowski, Jim Wing, Michael Sullivan. / **Git-R-Done (CA):** Sal Argo, Art Gelb, (Tom Nyman - Team MVP).

### Men's 80 Major

**Florida Investment Properties:** Duffie Stone (MVP), Vinny Remson, Tommy Sides, Larry McCurdy, Brad Smith. / **Emerald 80s (WA):** Tony Costa, Jim Hann, Carroll Shook. / **Jimmy's MN Legends 80s:** Fred Swenson, Bob D'Amadio.

### Men's 80 AAA

**Redwood City Gold Rush (CA):** Ron Schwartz, Dennis Craig, Bill Guzules, Bob Cushman, (Bill Beshore - Team MVP).

### Men's 85

**Center For Sight (FL):** Everett Arnold, Ferrell Sparks, Bernie Miller, Steve Sellinger, Kit Kittrell. / **Jimmy's MN Legends 85s:** Bob D'Amadio, Willie Wood, David Bray, Larry Herickhoff. / **Southwest Stars 85s (TX):** Jack Vaughn, Everett DeSha, Paul Janke, (Al Lenske - Team MVP).

## Third Session

### Men's 50 Major Plus

**Team USA (PA):** Charles Smith, Steve Heller, Alan Tanner, Ernie Donaldson. / **Texas Mavericks:** Mark Cerny, J.J. Schmidt, (David Velasquez - Team MVP)

### Men's 50 Major

**NorCal Thunderstruck:** Danny Arealvos, David Matusich, James Goethe, Bill Moranville, Elbert Certeza.

### Men's 50 AAA

**Roadhouse Blues/BP & Associates (PA):** Farlan Alusik, Chip Cregar, Bruce Davis, Rick Shelton, Steve Shellenberger, Time Hawkins (MVP). / **Top Gun 50's (CA):** Daniel Silvas, Kevin Thomas, Matt Kraemer. / **Team O50 (MO):** Rodney Lofton, Charles Earvin.

### Men's 50 AA

**Fifty GZ (TX):** Bobby Avant, John

Continued on Next Page

# WMC All-Tourney Team Continued

**Continued from Previous Page**  
Wilkerson, Carl Hoffman, Jeff Huser, Adolfo Leal, (Bernie Gutierrez – Team MVP). / **Gray Ghost (IN):** Stephan Smith, Clifford Burnett, Charles Ocacio, Murray Richards. / **Advil Knights (CA):** Bill Smith, Tom Kohler, Ken Knox. / **Big Horn Construction/Life Fitness (MN):** John Breyette, Bob Carpenter.



**Player from Team O50 take a healthy cut at the plate.**

## Fourth Session

### Men's 40 Major Plus

**Suncoast Adidas (FL):** Darryl Waddy, Rich Worline, Rhodney Donaldson, Ken Scobey. / **Firehouse Pub/Game Apparel/Absolut (MI):** Terry Patesel, Dytarious Edwards.

### Men's 40 Major

**K&B Beverage/AG Painting (AZ):** Curtis Horger, Erik Zimmermann, Ignacio Hurtado, Tony Holland.

### Men's 40 AAA

**Color By Design (MD):** Billy Nelson, Derrick Clay, Nate Conroy, Keith Delaney.

### Women's 40 Major

**TKP 40's/Karphone (CA):** Debra DiMeglio, Lisa Bull, Kristi Whitcomb, Jeanne Beauchamp, Gina Oliver. / **Kryptonite (FL):** Theresa Walburger, Karen Hunger, Kacee Crumpacker, April Blake. / **Greenspace Consulting & Holdings (KS):** Kristina Johnson, Kelly Humphreys, Teresa Jackson. / **Smack That (CA):** Trina Valencia, Stacey Francisco.

### Women's 40 AA

**Guam Team SOTTA:** Karen Santos, Cathy Santos, Iuhlia Chisato, Michelle Perez.

### Women's 50 Major

**Dreamgirlz (VA):** Renee Fuller, Sylvia Echols, Beverly Lovett, Kathy

O'Meara, Cara Coughenour. / **Arizona Dream Team:** Angie Linder, Terry Rhian, Aquanetta Gordon, Angie Ayala. / **Karphone 50's (CA):** Michelle Hesser, Toni Love, Vicki Ashcraft.

### Women's 50 AAA

**Stix With Impact (CA):** Renee Bland, Carolyn Fisher, Sheryl Sanchez, Hope Nulf, Cinthia Becks, Becky Robertson (MVP). / **PNW Rolling Thunder (WA):** Carrie Davis (MVP), Joan Schumacher, Annette Swenson, Kelly Asbjornsen, Sue Stokman. / **Who's Yer Daddy – 50 Shades of Grey (WA):** Ggi McClure, Tracie Rouse, Pat Johnson. / **H-Town Sisters With Bats (TX):** Anita Cox, Danae Jefferson.



**Pitcher from H-Town Sisters with Bats attempts to hit the mat.**

*Managers, if your all-tournament selections do not appear here, please email them to [anthony@seniorsoftball.com](mailto:anthony@seniorsoftball.com)*



**Thank you to all 612 teams and their fans for making the 2017 World Masters another huge success!**

# States: Michigan Shows Strong Softball Culture

## Continued from Page 4

Iron Club, an organization founded in 1992 to provide an opportunity for senior softball players in Colorado to participate in local, national and international softball leagues and tournaments.

“There’s this idea that Colorado is north,” said Goodrich. “But the weather is relatively mild in Denver. The sun comes out and melts all the snow. You can ski in the morning in the mountains and come back down and golf in the afternoon.”

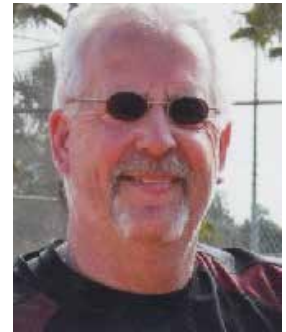
Along with the Scrap Iron Club, the Colorado Senior Softball Association and the Colorado Senior Softball Travel League provide ample opportunity to play the game, which is vital when competing against teams from warm weather states.

Michigan ranked 15th in the Wallethub.com study due in large part to a strong quality of life, ranking (12th), boosted no doubt by the plethora of outdoor activities that the Great Lakes provide.

Surprisingly, Michigan has the sixth most SSUSA players with over 1,300 players, trailing only California, Florida, Arizona, Texas and Washington, and ahead of other larger states such as New York (1,100 players), Illinois (990), Ohio (960) and Pennsylvania (860).

“Senior softball is alive and well in Michigan,” said Doug Betras, manager of Doug and Don’s Auto Care (Men’s 55 Major).

“Softball was huge 20 years ago,” said Betras.



**Doug Betras**

“This led to an abundant number of fields and indoor facilities being built, creating the strong number of SSUSA players today.”

Rankings, when determining any “best of” or “worst of” are always fluid and ever changing, and depend heavily on the metrics used to determine those rankings.

For example, a list done by Bankrate this past March determined New Hampshire as the best state to retire to, based on cost of living, healthcare quality, crime, cultural vitality, weather, taxes, senior citizens’ overall well-being, and prevalence of other seniors.

Florida, by contrast, the No. 1 state to retire to per Wallethub, was ranked 17th by Bankrate.

Colorado may no longer be the best kept secret, as the Centennial State ranked second per the Bankrate study.

The bottom line is that Senior Softball is alive and well in all 50 states – and it is thriving no matter the cost of living or other factors in the “Best Places to Retire” lists.

The reason?

When deciding where to live, softball definitely is a top priority for senior players.

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# Four Minnesota Senior Softball World Championship Teams Honored at Target Field

The Minnesota Twins recognized four defending Senior World Championship teams in pre-game ceremonies at Target Field prior to a game against the Seattle Mariners on June 13.

The following teams were recognized:



### Minnesota Prize 70's:

The Minnesota Prize 70's began an amazing run back in 2008 when they won the SPA National Championship and the SSUSA World Championship within a four-week period. Since then they have won several regional titles and four World Championships, including the 2016 SSUSA World Masters Championships in the 70's Major Division.

They are managed by Bob

"Doc" Hartshorn, Keith Irlbeck and Don Goltz.

Team members attending: Tim Bothof, Don Goltz, Curt Callstrom, Bill Sutter, Jerry Smrekar, Bob Goldstrand, Steve Dale, Larry Orth, Mark Heinz, Steve Strommen, Dennis Murphy, Bob Hartshorn, Keith Irlbeck, Mark Lillidahl, Tom Balcom, Denny Flanagan and Bill Meyer.



### Minnesota Masters 75's:

The Minnesota Masters 75's have won three Major Championships in the last two years: the 2016 SSUSA World Masters (AAA) and Winter World (Major) Championships and the 2017 SSUSA Tournament of Champions (AAA). MVP honors went to Norm Setnicker (twice) and

Garry Russell. They are managed by John Remington.

Team members attending: Norm Setnicker, Jim Milanovich, Dean Schwalenberg, Roger Hedin, Bob Lenzmeier, John Remington, Ken Bentfield, Earle Anderson, Tom Daniel, Dave Langrock, Ken Theisen, Ken Koch, Garry Russell and Gary Kennelly.



### MN Legends 80's and 85's:

The Minnesota Legends have won a combined 11 titles since 2010. They also won 11 other national titles between 2001 and 2010. Many of the current Legends team members been playing together since 2001.

The 85's team won the 2016 SSUSA World Masters Champi-

onships. They are managed by Hall of Famer Dick Anderson and led by another Hall of Famer and MVP Bob Lenzmeier.

Team Members attending: Legends 80's- Herb Brunell, Gordy Donnell, Dick Gosse, Darrell Laschen, Bob Lenzmeier and Dick Anderson.

Legends 85's attending- Stan Droogsma, John Gratzek, Dick Anderson, Larry Herickhoff and Mike Smieja.

"The Minnesota Twins did a great job setting up this event," said Timothy Bothof, member of the Minnesota Prize 70's.

"All of the World Champions had an awesome time! Even hall of famer Bert Blyleven, Twins TV color man enjoyed seeing the seniors in attendance. In the top of the 9th with the Twins leading with 20 runs on the board, Blyleven stated that the seniors must think that 'they were at a slo-pitch softball tournament!'"

## Transitioning To 2018 Manager Handbook

Senior Softball USA is transforming the annual Tournament Guide, which usually appears in this edition of Senior Softball News, into a Manager's Handbook for 2018.

"The Tournament Guide was originally designed to help teams plan their tournament season," said Anthony Ramos, Senior Softball News Managing Editor. "Today most teams simply use our Tournament Listing online, making the Tournament Guide obsolete."

In addition, according to SSUSA officials, the Tournament Guide was often outdated within

a few weeks because of the addition of – and changes to – tournaments after publication.

Instead of the Tournament Guide, SSUSA will be publishing a Manager's Handbook, which will be designed to help managers throughout the 2018 season.

The Manager's Handbook will explain roster restrictions for different tournaments, rules that changed in 2018, rules that often come up, and several other handy hints. The Manager's Handbook will be published and mailed in January 2018.

The current 2018 schedule is up on the SSUSA website. Please

visit <https://seniorsoftball.com/?events> to view the schedule. Additional dates to be added.

Please note a few location changes: the 2018 Eastern National Championships will be held in Valdosta, GA, while the

2018 Southern Championships will be held in Raleigh, NC. Also, the Men's 55 and 60, and Men's 50 divisions for the World Masters has been expanded to four days, instead of three.



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# 185 Teams Compete at 17th Annual Winter World Championships

By Anthony Ramos  
Softball News Report

PHOENIX – The 2017 Winter World Championships was held here Nov. 14-19 with 185 teams coming from 22 states and Canada. Twenty-seven division champions were crowned as teams looked to begin the 2018 campaign on the right foot with a berth to the 2019 Tournament of Champions.

The tournament kicked off with the Men's 65 through 85 divisions playing Nov. 14-16.

In the nine-team Men's 65/70 Platinum division, top seed Arizona Ancient bounced back from its 16-9 loss in the championship game against No. 2 seed Enviro-Vac Marauders (BC, Canada), to win the "if" game 29-19, and defend their home turf. AZ Ancient downed Enviro-Vac 15-11 earlier in the bracket as well, knocking the team into the elimination bracket. Animals (CA) finished in third place after winning a pair of games in the elimination side of the bracket.

The 17-team Men's 65 AAA division saw another local team take the top spot, as Rocco's OTD (AZ) registered a perfect week, going 2-0 in seeding play, en route to securing the No. 1 seed, before going 5-0 in bracket play, including a 23-10 victory over Last Call 65 (NV) in the championship game. Last Call posted a 4-2 record in bracket play, with both losses coming against Rocco's. No Guts, No Glory (CA) finished in third place also posting a 4-2 record, with both losses coming at the hands of Last Call. No Dice/Bay Photo Lab (CA) rounded out the top



four finishers in the largest division of the first session.

Git-R-Done 65 (CA) rallied to win the four-team Men's 65 AA division, winning four straight elimination games, including back-to-back victories over top seed New Mexico Boomers 65's in the championship (18-15) and "if" game (11-4). 911 Softball Club (CA) finished in third place.

Tri-State Diamondbacks (NM) avenged their loss in the championship game of the eight-team Men's 70 Major division against Ranalls Realty (AZ) with an 18-7 win in the "if" game. Ranalls Realty plated a pair of runs in the bottom of the open inning in the championship game to complete the walk-off thriller and force the "if" game. No. 8 seed Sons of Pitches (CA) rebounded from its 0-2 record in seeding play to eventually finish in third place, going 3-2 in the bracket, including a 22-16 upset win over top seed Sidewinders 70 (AZ), to

open bracket play.

Midwest Express 70's (IA) posted a perfect 4-0 record in bracket play, including an 18-14 win over PDC Yankees 70's (CO) in the champions game, to in the five-team Men's 70 AAA division. Top seed Git-R-Done 70 (CA) finished in third place.

Scrap Iron 75 Legacy (CO) dominated bracket play in the four-team Men's 75 Major division, going 3-0, including a 19-7 win over top seed Sidewinders 75's (AZ). Kokopelli Eye Scorpions (AZ) finished in third place.

The Men's 75 AAA division featured a best two-out-of-three game series between the Arizona Outlaws 75 and Git-R-Done 75 (CA). AZ Outlaws 75 swept the series, winning the opener, 14-10, before completing the sweep with a 26-15 victory in the championship game.

Fairway Ford (CA) double-dipped Emerald 80's (WA) to win the three-team Men's 80 Major division. After falling to Emerald

80's 19-11 in their opening bracket game, Fairway Ford defeated Scrap Iron Gray Berets (CO) 21-5 in an elimination game, before avenging their earlier loss with wins in the both the championship (21-15) and "if" game (15-7) over Emerald.

In a series that would take all three games, Arizona Prospectors 85 topped Git-R-Done 80 (CA) to win the Men's 80/85 Gold division. After Git-R-Done won a hard-fought game one 16-15; AZ Prospectors won back-to-back games by scores of 23-17 and 17-6, to win the title.

The Winter World Championships continued with the Men's 40 through 60 age divisions, as well as the Women's divisions, playing Friday through Sunday, Nov. 17-19.

Starting with the Women's 40 Major division, SoCal Toxic (CA) swept Get Dirty (NM) by scores of 13-1 and 19-7, in a best two-out-of-three game series.



**SoCal Toxic and Get Dirty Pose for a Post-Game Photo.**

No. 5 seed Misfits (CA) made a Cinderella run through the seven-team Women's 40 Silver division bracket, going 4-0, including a win over top seed Straight Pride (CA) 18-1 and a pair of wins over second seeded Saints (AZ), including a 15-7 triumph in the championship game. Dames Got Game (AZ) won three

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# WWC: Elite/Scrap Iron Wins Largest Division; 19-team Men's 50 AAA

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**Misfits Celebrate Their Victory.** straight elimination games before falling to Saints in the third-place game 14-11.

Old School (CA) recorded a flawless weekend, going 2-0 in seeding play and 3-0 in bracket play, including a 21-8 win over Arizona Dream Team in the championship game of the five-team Women's 50 division. AZ Dream Team had won three straight elimination games before falling short in the championship game. Top seed Twisted Fossils (MA) finished in third place.



**Old School Wins Title in Their Debut at the 50's Level.**

In the seven-team Women's 55/60 Division, 2nd Wind 55 (CA) went unbeaten, going 2-0 in seeding play, before rattling off four straight wins in the bracket, including a 16-10 win over California Spirit 60. As the highest finishing 60's team, CA Spirit 60 would also earn first place awards.

CA Spirit 60 won four elimination games in a row before running out of gas in the championship game. Top seed Ladies Choice (CA) finished in

third place.

Another team completing a perfect weekend included Jolico Seniors 65 (MI), who went 3-0 in seeding play and 3-0 in bracket play, including a 17-4 win over California Spirit 65 in the championship game of the four-team Women's 65 division. Saints Express (CA) finished in third place.

Playing in a best two-out-of-three game series to determine the Women's 70 division champion, California Spirit 70 swept New Kids on the Block (CA) by scores of 17-7 and 14-12.

The five-team Men's 40 Major Plus division saw the top two seeds battle it out in the championship game, as top seed GTS (ID) completed its undefeated weekend with a 26-21 win over K&B Beverage/AG Painting (AZ) in the championship game.

After losing their first game in the bracket, 29-26, against Nikon Trucking (CA), K&B Beverage/AG Painting won three straight games to reach the championship game, including a thrilling 21-20 win over Nikon Trucking in the third-place game, to avenge their earlier loss. K&B Beverage/AG Painting entered the bottom of the open trailing 20-18 before going on to score three runs to complete the comeback win and punch their ticket to the championship game.

The 14-team Men's 40 Major division saw five teams enter bracket play with 2-0 records following seeding play. SBOB/Voodoo Sports (AZ), one of the five unbeaten teams, continued their solid play into the bracket, going 5-0, including a 21-12 win over FunHavers (AZ) in the



**GTS Run the Table in the 40-Major Plus Division**

championship game. After suffering an early loss in the bracket against Senior Bandits/Whitton Companies (AZ) 19-18, FunHavers dropped into the elimination side of the bracket. With their backs against the wall, FunHavers rattled off an impressive six wins in elimination games, including a 23-21 victory over Senior Bandits in the third-place game, avenging their earlier loss, to reach the championship game. Blue Pill Mafia (AZ) also made a valiant run through the elimination bracket with four straight wins, before running out of gas against FunHavers 25-24 in the fourth-place game.

Aces (AZ) won the three-team Men's 40 AAA division, going 5-0 during the weekend, including a thrilling 25-24 win over Focus (AZ) in the championship game.

Another team that would go on to complete a perfect weekend was Bad Seed 50s (CA), going 2-0 in seeding play, before winning three straight bracket games, including an 18-15 win over top seed West Coast Water 50's (NV) in the championship game of the six-team Men's 50 Platinum division. 4 the Fallen (AZ) made a strong push through the elimination bracket, winning three straight games before falling in the third-place game against West Coast Water 25-22.

The largest division of the Winter Worlds, the 19-team 50 AAA division, saw Elite/Scrap Iron (CO) escape the gauntlet, winning back-to-back games over Thunderstruck 50 (AZ), in the championship and "if" game, 26-12 and 18-13, respectively. Thunderstruck defeated Elite/Scrap Iron 25-21 to get into the championship game. Elite/Scrap Iron rebounded from the loss by defeating Pacific Coast Alliance (CA) 25-18 in the third-place game. Entering bracket play as the No. 15 seed after going 0-2 in seeding, Pacific Coast Alliance posted a 5-2 record in bracket play en route to their third-place finish. Arizona Prime Time rounded out the top four finishing teams.

In the eight-team Men's 55 Major division, Arizona Old School 55 recorded a perfect 4-0 record in bracket play, including a 28-16 win over L & R Softball (TX) in the championship game. L & R Softball fell to Arizona Old School 27-18 earlier in the bracket in a match-up of unbeaten teams. The loss dropped L & R down in to the third-place game, where they edged out Arizona Legends 25-24, setting up a rematch with AZ Old School in the championship game.

Los Vatos Viejos 55 (CA) avenged their loss in the championship game of the 11-team Men's 55 AAA division 17-11 against top seed RG Outlaws (NM) with a 27-18 victory in the "if" game. After dropping their second game in bracket play, RG Outlaws won four straight elimination games, including the championship game, before

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# WWC: AK and HI Teams Win Titles

**Continued from Previous Page** falling short in the "if" game. KSS (AZ) finished in third place. Kamikaze 55 (CA) also had a valiant run through the elimination bracket with three straight wins before falling in the fourth-place game.

The Men's 55 AA division was determined by a best two-out-of-three game series between 808 Hawaii and Arizona Blaze. After dropping game one 23-22, Arizona Blaze came back to wins in game two (23-14) and game three (29-22) to take the division.

A best two-out-of-three

game series would also be used to crown the champion of the Men's 60 Major Plus division. Texas Crush Sixties would draw first blood, taking the opening game 28-27; while East Bay Oldies (CA) evened the series with a one-run thriller of their own, 29-28. In the rubber match, Texas Crush Sixties would go on to win the evenly matched series by a score of 34-30.

Southwest Bandits (AZ) ran through the eight-team Men's 60 Major division with an unblemished mark, going 2-0 in seeding play to earn the top seed, before

going on to win four straight in the bracket, including a 26-25 come-from-behind win over Last Call 60 (NV) in the championship game. Trailing 25-21 heading into the bottom of the open, Southwest Bandits scored five runs in the final inning to complete the comeback. Arizona Old School 60 finished in third place.

Team Alaska rattled off five straight wins in the bracket of the 18-team Men's 60 AAA divisions, including a 30-18 win over Northwest Softball Club/Underdogs (WA) in the championship game. Big Daddy's Donuts (MO)

finished in third place, while CJ & S Express (AZ) finished in fourth. Honorable mention goes to Chicago Panthers (IL), who bounced back from an 0-2 showing in seeding play, to post a 5-2 record in bracket play, including four straight wins in elimination games, to be one of the final six teams playing on Sunday.

The five-team Men's 60 AA division saw Makua Alii (HI) post a 3-0 record in bracket play, including a 30-19 win over top seed Los Vatos Viejos 60 (AZ) in the championship game. Austin Wizards (TX) finished third.

## 2017 WWC All-Tournament Team Named

### Women's 40 Major

**SoCal Toxic:** Natalie Parsons, Frances Rojas, Becky Hardy, Irene Jones, Danelle Stoller. / **Get Dirty (NM):** Heather Quintana, Carolyn Ortega, Elizabeth Kuehne, Shelly Gonzales.

### Women's 40 Silver

**Misfits (CA):** Amanda Martin, Lori Alexander, Patti Albrecht, Socorro Gonzalez, Wendy George.

### Women's 50 Gold

**Arizona Dream Team:** Angie Linder, Kim Moore, Cathy Nico-demus, Jacqui Halyard. / **Twisted Fossils 50 (MA):** Connie Skinner, Carolee Morse, Tammy Schondelmayer.

### Women's 55/60

**California Spirit 60:** Holly Guntermann, Anne Sneden, Steffnie Molley, Patti McCoy. / **Ladies Choice (CA):** Donna Toft, Donna Vandagriff, Cheryl Coyle, Dana Malone.

### Women's 65

**California Spirit 65:** Kathy Lord, Terry Sheldon, Darlene Harrity, Betsy Borda. / **Saints Express (AZ):** Patricia Settje, Lynn Shutt, Marianne Lassigne-Vargas.

### Women's 70

**California Spirit 70:** Edna Allen, Donna Gualtiere, Diane Toomey,

Pam Bedwell, Bernadette Garcia.

### / New Kids on the Block (CA):

Penne Adams, Kristina Langston, Jan Anderson, Penny Thomas.

### Men's 40 Major Plus

**GTS (ID):** Brian Fong, Chris Hoshaw, Joey Smith, Ryan Barabe, Pat Paschal.

### Men's 40 Major

**SBOB/Voodoo Sports (AZ):** Brad Peterson, Eddie Chatham, Joe Rivera, Arnold Mares, Vinny Sieckowski. / **Funhavers (AZ):** Dave DeWitt, Roger Todd, Joey Meins, Troy Smith.

### Men's 40 AAA

**Focus (AZ):** Paul Winans, Jorge Rivera, Beaux Treguboff, Eloy Chavez.

### Men's 50 Platinum

**Bad Seed 50s (CA):** Anthony Robbins, Dwayne Curry, Marty Daniels, Brian Gregoire, Maurice Ward. / **4**

**The Fallen (AZ):** Mark Ozolins, Paul Hendricks, Darrin Meisterhans.

### Men's 50 AAA

**Thunderstruck (AZ):** Mike King, Randy Pongratz, Steve Sigourney, Mark Googins. / **Pacific Coast Alliance (CA):** Thomas De Leo, Greg Fortin, Lawson Williams.

### Men's 55 Major

**Arizona Old School:** Tom Casady,

Robby Tucker, James Ketterling, Greg Colyar, Randy Tompkins. / **AZ Legends:** Scott Porter.

### Men's 55 AAA

**RG Outlaws (NM):** Eric Stephens, Joey Aragon, Al Marrujo, Hector Reyers.

### Men's 55 AA

**Arizona Blaze:** Fortino Garcia, Rick Romero, Rick Aponte, Rudy Huizar, Roy Duarte.

### Men's 60 Major Plus

**Texas Crush Sixties:** Mike Garibay, John Roach, Donnie Colbath, Murray Williams, Joe Witherspoon.

### Men's 60 Major

**Arizona Old School:** Ken Falk, Paul Cooley, Jim Fisher.

### Men's 60 AAA

**Team Alaksa:** Greg Earl, George Ladenburg, Rudy Brantner, Mike Story, Steve Marchand. / **Big Daddy's Donuts (MO):** Terry Cloutier, Jamie Carter, Walt VanBibber.

### Men's 60 AA

**Makua Alii (HI):** Charley Haitzuka, Charles Peterson, Glenn Morihara, Daniel Silva, Gordon Shiraishi.

### Men's 65 Major

**Enviro-Vac Marauder (BC, Canada):** Peter Sheen, Bob Dean, Ralph Tipton, Ross Evison.

### Men's 65 AAA

**Rocco's OTD (AZ):** Joe Simental, Rick Mares, Angel Lopez, Charles Bullard, Pablo Rosthenhausler. / **No Guts, No Glory (CA):** Jack Brunschmid, Jon Forbes, Joe Guerrero.

### Men's 65 AA

**Git-R-Done (CA):** John Potter, Bill Rugh, Fred Yunt, Bob Herrera, Wayne Arendt.

### Men's 70 Major

**Tri-State Diamondbacks (NM):** Dan Shewcraft, Ronne Mercer, Dick Schimmels, Ed Sullivan, Les Poland. / **Sons of Pitches (CA):** Dennis McCoy, Dave Miller, Hank Ornelaz.

### Men's 70 AAA

**PDC Yankees 70s (CO):** Bob Williams, Carl Lusk, Ranison Kennedy, Ron Brooks. / **Git-R-Done (CA):** Bryan Wilkins, Bill Hamilton, Ron Flathers.

### Men's 75 AAA

**Git-R-Done (CA):** Gene Dick, Jack Fisher, Greg Krebs, Jimmy Zimmerman.

*Managers, if your all-tournament selections do not appear here, please email them to [anthony@seniorsoftball.com](mailto:anthony@seniorsoftball.com)*



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# Winter Nationals Kick Off 2018 Season

FORT MYERS, FLA. – The 17th annual Winter National Championships was held here in Lee County Nov. 7-12 with 109 teams competing for the first bids towards the 2019 Tournament of Champions.

The tournament began with the Men's 65's through 85's age divisions playing Nov. 7-9, while the Men's 40's through 60's took the field Nov. 10-12.

In total, there were 18 teams that secured their berth into the TOC in 2019.

Suncoast Adidas (FL) – (40 Major Plus), S2S/.40 CAL (FL) – TOC (40 Major), Good Times/Clean Planet Foods (FL) – (50 Major), No Shows (FL) – (50 AAA), Florida Automated Shade (55 Major), Gap Sports (FL) – (55 AAA), Team Florida (60 Major Plus), AMR/Clean Planet/A Special Taste (MI) – (60 Major),

Playmakers (WI) – (60 AAA), Glory Daze (KY) – (60 AA), Team Florida (65 Major Plus), Handeland Flooring (WI) – TOC (65 Major), Bradford White (PA) – (65 AAA), Jersey Masters Red (NJ) – (65 AA), Jersey Masters

(NJ) – (70 Major), CC Medical Services (NY) – (70 AAA), Florida Legends – (75 Major Plus), and Chadwell Supply (FL) – (75 AAA) all locked up a bid to the TOC in February, 2019.

The highlight of the tourna-

ment was the Men's 80/85 Gold division, which featured an impressive eight teams competing, including Florida Investment Properties, Jimmy's MN Legends 80's, BackOffice Associates (MA), New York Statesmen, Bucs and Bulls 80's (FL), Pro-Health Care 80 (WI), Chicago Geezers 80's (IL) and Center For Sight 85 (FL).

A full seven-game round robin was used to determine the champion, as Florida Investment Properties took the top spot via their 6-1 record. New York Statesmen posted a runner-up finish with a 5-2 record, while ProHealth Care finished third with a 4-3 mark.

All 80's and 85's teams are automatically invited to the TOC.

Read the full tournament recap here: <https://seniorsoftball.com/?news&story=1368>

## 2017 WNC All-Tournament Team Named

### Men's 50/55 Platinum

**Public Enemy (FL):** Gary DeMyer, Pat Burnett, Arnaldo Torres.

### Men's 50 AAA

**No Shows (FL):** Mike Lloyd, Douglas Maxwell, Nick Brondo, John Briggs, Mark Spetsios. / **Avalon**

**Insurance/50 Caliber (FL):** Richard Perez, William Perez, Steve Brennan.

### Men's 55 Major

**Florida Automated Shade:** Scott Good, Jeff Farney, Harry Seward, Bernie Gonzalez, Doug Howells.

### Men's 55 AAA

**GAP Sports (FL):** Paul Russell, Tony Williams, Pete Leto, Donald Keshock, Steve King.

### Men's 60 Major Plus

**Team Florida:** Robert Lehman Jr., Louis Reyes Jr., James Wacha, Gregory W. Wacha, Joe Dixon.

### Men's 60 Major

**Action Auto Parts 60s (RI):** Bill LaFlamme, Jim Rock, Bryant

McKinley.

### Men's 60 AAA

**Playmakers (WI):** Donald Kleinder, Steve Burbick, Dave Gerdman, Tom Sweinberg, Tom Reed. / **Mustangs (FL):** Larry Book, John Collins, David Shirer.

### Men's 60 AA

**Glory Daze (KY):** Steve Greenert, Tony Fowler, Mitch Smith, Danny Hall, Rick Heil.

### Men's 65 Major Plus

**Team Florida:** Jim Lyle, Ed Carington, Jime Wiley, Rocky Scott, Norm Edwards, Steve Kurmin.

/ **PSL Construction (FL):** John Klein, Floyd Williams, Richard Lee Edwards, Bruce Kallioinen.

### Men's 65/70 Platinum

**Handeland Flooring (WI):** Phil Higgins, Bob Szaniawski, Rich Olson, Mike Baehman, Carl Budnik. /

**Who's on First (FL):** Bill Sorenson, Ray Gutierrez, Jim Kahn, Roy Oke.

/ **Venom 70 (FL):** Dave Clover, Ed Sparkman, Stew Casterline.

### Men's 65 AAA

**Acousti (FL):** Dave Jolly, Dave Carden, Pete Tighe, Terry McIlrath. / **Talaga Construction (CT):** Rich Bettley, Gary Berdn, Dave Kuchinsky.

### Men's 65 AA

**Jersey Masters Red (NJ):** Ed Kushner, Dennis Watson, Mike Sivilish, Rich Kovach, Jeff Peters. / **Kentuckiana:** Rick Heil, Rock Hancock, Ken Lindig, Jim Steed.

### Men's 70 Major

**Boca's (FL):** Don Cabral, Pat Zampella, Dave Wheeler, Ray Dye.

### Men's 70 Silver

**CC Medical Services (NY):** Dave Clark, Rein Greismer, Pete McClelland, Ken Schneider, Willy DeSario. / **Lane Construction (FL):** Joe Byrtus, Don Bobish, Dave Whitney.

**Men's 75 Platinum**

**Florida Legends:** Ron Locke, Matt Callahan, Tom Dabbs, Bob Koss, Bill Brotherton, Zeb Carter.

### Men's 75 AAA

**Chadwell Supply (FL):** Paul Gawel, Dave Burget, Tom Giles, Juan Alicea-Sanchez, Dave Chadwell. / **Monkey Joe's Big Nut Company (NJ):** Bob Thomas, Bill Armstrong, Ed Lloyd, Herminio Cruz.

### Men's 80/85 Gold

**Florida Investment Properties:** Brad Smith, Larry McCurdy, Jim Bavis, Tom Sides, Jacob Wood, Ron Huser. / **New York Statesmen:** Art Barnes, Tom Ladd, John Tortora, Jake Dieter.

*Managers, if your all-tournament selections do not appear here, please email them to [anthony@seniorsoftball.com](mailto:anthony@seniorsoftball.com)*



# De-Bunking Taking First Pitch Myth

By **Jim Teeter**  
**Guest Contributor**  
**Senior Softball News**

To take or not to take. That is the question.

Google “should you swing at the first pitch in softball” and you will not find a single article. You will find hundreds of articles about swinging at a first pitch in baseball and even a few about fast-pitch softball.

But slow-pitch softball? No chance. So it’s time to take a look at the issue.

There are so many statistics available to test theories in baseball. But slow-pitch softball?

Fugedaboutit.

Since softball players are not really serious about playing baseball, they don’t keep statistics to prove or disprove anything. But everybody has their opinion. Here’s mine.

I do have a bias against taking pitches in slow-pitch softball. I am not afraid to take a bad pitch. In my most current spring 2017 baseball season, I was tied for the league lead league in walks with 10 in 57 plate appearances. I have no stats for softball.

In “For the Love of the Game,” Michael Monsour writes “don’t swing at the first pitch.” He cites four reasons:

- Starting pitchers will throw more pitches
- Allows coaches to advance base runners
- Permits hitters to get timing on pitchers and see all pitches
- Work toward a more favorable count

At first glance, I suppose all those reasons sound legit. Let’s think about those for a moment.

Bullet one, so pitchers will have to throw more pitches? Are you kidding? Do you know

anybody who can’t throw 500 pitches underhand in a day? Give me a break. That definitely does not apply to slow-pitch softball. Strike 1.

On to bullet two, advancing baserunners. Uh, and just how is the coach gonna advance the runners? By stealing a base? Or a bunt? I don’t think so. Strike 2.

Bullet three, timing and to see all pitches. In softball? I know, we might get fooled by that changeup. Strike 3.

Finally, bullet four, working to a more favorable count. OK, maybe I’ll buy some of that. After all there are only 3 strikes in baseball. But let me ask you a question: Do you think 0-1 is a favorable count?

OK do you need to hear from a better source than some blogger you never heard of? In SportingCharts “Take a Pitch” they say “The most predictable count in which batters take a pitch is three balls and no strikes. Since one more ball would put the hitter on base, he can afford to take a pitch, even if it ends up as a strike. All this of course depends on a particular batter’s strategy, input from managers and coaches, and how well a batter has recently been performing.”

I need to emphasize in that quote “he can afford to take a pitch.” Why the emphasis? Because at 0-2 in slow-pitch you absolutely cannot afford to take a strikeout; at 0-1 you cannot afford to be 0-2; and at 0-0 you do not need to give the pitcher an 0-1 advantage.

More important, what kind of pitch do you like? In baseball that could mean a fastball vs a curve or a change-up. Sliders or knuckleballs. In softball, about the only difference in any pitch is

whether it is pitched high or low. Sure, it can be inside or outside, but no decent softball player will ever be fooled by a 6- to 12-foot high pitch. But if you prefer a lower pitch, say 6-8 feet, why would you swing at a 12-foot strike 1?

But what about the converse? When you see a first-pitch cookie coming in at 6 feet, why would you ever let it go? Because of some stupid unwritten rule? An arbitrary rule dictated by your coach -- that I intend to kill (the rule, not the coach)?

If you take a first strike, you are getting yourself behind and jeopardizing your on-base chances. Those who do not take the first strike get 50 percent more chances to reach base. You get 3 strikes instead of 2. And 50 percent is not a low number; it’s a huge advantage.

Currently, in addition to my softball tournament teams, I also play in four softball leagues (and three baseball leagues). There’s one thing I’ve noticed about them they all have in common. The other teams that always take a strike – we always beat them. Are my teams that good? Or is taking strike 1 dumb?

If you absolutely must take a pitch, do not signal your intention to the pitcher. Besides letting him know you are taking (pitcher’s advantage) you did not receive the benefit (if there really is one, like in baseball) of watching the pitch. I’ll admit you’ll look cool taking. I also bet the pitch will be a strike.

Personally in baseball I love pitching to guys who won’t swing at the first pitch. One power hitter comes to mind. I can throw him a slow, straight strike right down the middle every time to go ahead

0-1. And as a bonus, when I miss the first pitch, knowing he won’t swing at the next one either, I know I don’t have to resort to a breaking ball or something he won’t hit out of the park – because I know he won’t swing!

Now I can give him an off-speed pitch inside and let him belt it foul for strike two. Then I own him. I guess a softball pitcher never really owns a batter like you do in baseball. But they can certainly pitch short, deep or off the plate and force the batter to swing at a pitch on which they are more likely to make a weak out.

I also like softball teams who take the first pitch when I’m in the field. Number 1, I can take off (relax) a pitch. But more important I watch my pitcher take the advantage. On the other side of the coin, I hate to watch a teammate take a strike, rip a foul just outside the foul line, and then have to make a weak out backing up on strike 3 or worse -- strike out defending the plate on strike 3. The out could have been avoided by taking 50 percent more swings (not giving up strike 1).

So, senior softball player, why are you taking the first strike?

## BE A GUEST CONTRIBUTOR FOR SENIOR SOFTBALL NEWS

*Do you have an article or news story that you would like to contribute to Senior Softball News? If so, please submit your article via email to [anthony@seniorsoftball.com](mailto:anthony@seniorsoftball.com).*



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